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Security Council
Fifty-seventh year

Cooperation between the United Nations and regional and other organizations: cooperation between the United Nations and the Council of Europe; cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization of the Islamic Conference

United Nations Year of Dialogue among Civilizations

Culture of peace

The situation in the Middle East

Measures to eliminate international terrorism

Letter dated 7 March 2002 from the Permanent Representative of Turkey to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit herewith the statement made by Turkey, as the host country together with Qatar, as the Chairman of the ninth session of the Islamic Summit Conference, and Spain, as the President of the European Union, at the end of the Organization of the Islamic Conference-European Union Joint Forum on Civilization and Harmony: the Political Dimension, held in Istanbul on 12 and 13 February 2002, under the patronage of the Government of Turkey (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda items 21 (c), 21 (d), 25, 28, 42 and 166, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Ümit **Pamir**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

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Annex to the letter dated 7 March 2002 from the Permanent Representative of Turkey to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

13 February 2002

The Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the OIC member and observer countries and the EU member and candidate countries came together, on 12 and 13 February 2002, for a Joint Forum in Istanbul at the invitation of the Foreign Minister of Turkey, to share their assessments of the world's present political situation and to promote understanding and harmony among civilizations.

History has taught us that the lack of mutual knowledge and respect among civilizations can greatly affect world stability and peace. Harmony and welfare are nurtured when different peoples make communication a priority, taking the time to express and listen to each other's views and interests, acknowledging and tolerating differences, while at the same time seeking out commonalities that can help build strong relationships that promote political and economic cooperation.

The tragic events of 11 September and their repercussions have shown the need to strengthen tolerance and understanding among different cultures to prevent the reappearance of deeply rooted prejudices that can surface. The horrifying attacks of 11 September are purely brutal acts of terrorism and they cannot be explained or justified for religious, cultural or any other reasons whatsoever. On the other hand, 11 September has also sparked a growing consciousness of the need for all sides to discuss and attempt to better understand the differences in perceptions, values and interests, as well as to promote tolerance and appreciation for cultural diversity among them. We jointly have a responsibility to address and resolve issues which can lead to divisions within and between our communities, to embrace and value our diversities, and to promote and uphold the values we all share.

During its deliberations, the OIC-EU Joint Forum has acknowledged the various activities, resolutions, recommendations and reports of international and regional organizations, such as the United Nations and UNESCO, the Organization of the Islamic Conference, the European Union, the Council of Europe, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, the Arab League, the Organization of African Unity and other forums such as the Barcelona Process, including the Global Agenda for Dialogue among Civilizations adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on 9 November 2001, which are designed to protect and improve the common heritage of mankind and the shared values of different cultures, and to enhance tolerance, dialogue and cooperation within and among nations and peoples.

In the course of the discussions the following points were agreed upon:

- The Forum reaffirms its strong belief that cultures, in their diversity, complement and enhance one another. The Forum also confirms its belief in the harmony among civilizations and in its attainability.
- The main means to support coherence and solidarity and to avoid racial, religious and cultural prejudices is to enhance our knowledge of one another through communication and cooperation for the promotion of common universal values, such as those enshrined in the Universal Declaration of

Human Rights and other relevant international human rights instruments. To this end the two political organizations, the European Union and the Organization of the Islamic Conference, have a joint responsibility to contribute to the achievements of these goals.

- The Forum affirms that terrorism cannot be justified for any reason whatsoever. It recognizes the joint responsibility to fight terrorism in all its forms and manifestations within the framework of the United Nations, in conformity with its Charter and its resolutions.

- The OIC and EU countries are committed to defining problems emerging from cultural prejudices and political and economic injustices and to promoting solutions that will contribute to universal peace, welfare and stability.

- The Forum underlined that for peace, stability and harmony to prevail the Middle East conflict must be settled in a just and comprehensive manner and in accordance with international law and the relevant Security Council resolutions. In this context, the "two State" solution will contribute to bring peace and security to the peoples concerned.

- The OIC-EU Forum, having listened to the exchange of ideas and to participants' views, has concluded that there is a need for further cooperation. The Forum proposes that existing bilateral and multilateral frameworks continue to be used for general debate on the issues raised during this meeting.

- The Forum noted with appreciation the invitation of His Highness the Emir of the State of Qatar in his capacity as current Chairman of the Organization of the Islamic Conference to host a OIC-EU Troika meeting in the second half of the current year, in Doha.

- The Forum thanked the Government of Turkey for the initiative and effort in organizing this Forum, which constituted an event of great political significance. They welcomed Turkey's intention to publish the *compte rendu* of the OIC-EU Joint Forum and its readiness to facilitate communication among the participating countries and organizations if the need arises.